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February 12, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

I write to express my concern about the ongoing outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, China late last year.

According to the most recent reporting from the World Health Organization (WHO), there are more than 43,000 confirmed cases globally and the WHO has rated the global risk as "high." The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is tracking thirteen confirmed cases in the U.S., none of which have been terminal at this point. Just this week, the novel Coronavirus surpassed the total death toll from the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2002-2003.

Understandably, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), including the CDC and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), are working diligently to contain the spread of the virus within the interior of the U.S. Just last week, the FDA granted an emergency use authorization for novel Coronavirus diagnostic kits to be administered; this will allow hundreds of test kits to be deployed to labs and test sites across the country.

In my home state of New Jersey, Newark Liberty International Airport is one of eleven airports across the country designated for enhanced screening procedures for passengers arriving from impacted areas and ensuring the virus does not spread further.

It is critical that your Department has the resources needed to fully combat this virus and prevent the further spread within the U.S. Last week, the Director-General of the WHO, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stressed the need for additional financial assistance stating, "our message to the international community is, invest today or pay more later."

Recently, my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee wrote to you urging the Administration to transmit a request to Congress for emergency supplemental appropriations to respond to this crisis. I join their call for you to submit this request to Congress and I will

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likewise urge Congressional leadership to act swiftly to appropriate the necessary funding to attack the novel Coronavirus head on.

I know I join the rest of my colleagues in assuring you that we stand ready to work with the Administration and provide any and all support necessary to stop the spread of this virus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Josh Gottheimer', with a stylized, cursive script.

Josh Gottheimer

MEMBER OF CONGRESS